United Nations S/2015/257

Security Council

Distr.: General
16 April 2015
English
Original: French

Letter dated 9 April 2015 from the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit to you a letter dated 9 April 2015 from the Special Representative of the National Coalition of Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces to the United Nations regarding the situation in the refugee camp in Yarmouk (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) François **Delattre**

15-06047 (E) 200415 200415

Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 9 April 2015 from the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: English]

On behalf of the people of Syria and the National Coalition of Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces, it is with great alarm that I draw your attention to the humanitarian disaster currently unfolding in the Yarmouk refugee camp. Comprehensive action by the Security Council is needed to stop the slaughter of innocent civilians at the hands of extremists from the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and end the indiscriminate aerial bombardment by Assad's forces in besieged areas across Syria.

For the past two years, Assad's forces have overseen a brutal siege of the Yarmouk refugee camp. They have denied the camp's residents access to humanitarian aid. They have shelled and barrel-bombed residential neighbourhoods, killing and maiming innocent men, women and children with indiscriminate aerial bombardment. The suffering wrought by Assad's forces has caused a staggering 90 per cent decline in Yarmouk's population, from 150,000 refugees at the start of the Syrian uprising to fewer than 18,000 today.

The brutality and chaos generated by Assad have allowed extremism to fester. As of 1 April 2015, Yarmouk has been infiltrated by depraved terrorist forces represented by the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant. ISIL extremists have killed innocent children, detained women and children, kidnapped medical workers and beheaded those who dared to defend civilians trapped inside the camp. As a result of these illegal and immoral actions, local non-governmental organizations have been unable to deliver water, food or medical care to civilians in need.

The people of Yarmouk should not have to suffer one day longer. Comprehensive action by the Security Council is needed to end ISIL gains on the ground and protect civilians from the regime's indiscriminate aerial bombardment. On behalf of the people of Syria, I therefore ask that members of the Security Council work without delay:

- To ensure the delivery of rapid humanitarian relief to civilians inside Yarmouk. Refugees in Yarmouk desperately need food, water and medical care. The Security Council should take the steps needed to provide such assistance
- To enforce Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014) and 2191 (2014) and demand immediate access to all of Syria's besieged areas, where over 440,000 people are currently living without access to basic food and medical supplies
- To use the tools at the Security Council's disposal. If the Syrian regime denies immediate, unconditional and unfettered humanitarian access, the Security Council should impose coercive measures designed to ensure compliance with the Council's will
- To stop the Syrian regime's indiscriminate bombardment of civilian-occupied areas by authorizing the establishment of a no-fly zone. A no-fly zone will

protect civilians and enable the creation of safe zones into which the delivery of humanitarian aid will be more feasible

The dire situation in Yarmouk is yet another reminder of the Security Council's failure to adopt a comprehensive solution that tackles the root cause of the Syrian crisis: the Assad dictatorship. Assad's brutal tactics have both directly and indirectly contributed to the advance of ISIL and prevented the delivery of humanitarian aid by United Nations agencies into besieged areas.

Comprehensive action by members of the Security Council would provide immediate protection to civilians, facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid and create the conditions needed for a political solution to take root. If the Council will not shoulder its responsibilities, it is incumbent on United Nations Member States to take the necessary steps unilaterally.

(*Signed*) Najib **Ghadbian**
Special Representative of the Syrian National Coalition
to the United Nations